

COVID-19 Health System Updates

While the Omicron wave continues to roll across our region, we are seeing more signs that we've passed the peak.

Among those signs are the New York State seven-day average test positivity rates, which as of yesterday were 13.5 percent for New York City, 17.6 percent for Long Island, and 15.2 percent for the mid-Hudson region. These numbers have declined rapidly over the past week, and in parts of New York City the single-day numbers are now under 10 percent.

As of this morning, we had 823 inpatients with COVID-19 across the system, 97 of whom were in critical care. These numbers have been steady to slightly down in recent days. But they are still extraordinarily high, and that means many of you are still working extremely hard. The evidence suggests that this will get better soon, but I want to acknowledge up front that on many of our units, it hasn't yet.

Because we are not out of the woods, I need to remind you that all meetings should continue to be held virtually, and all employees and volunteers who can work effectively from home should continue to do so, through the end of January.

We are still awaiting detailed guidance from the state Department of Health about the vaccine booster mandate. In the meantime, please continue to encourage eligible staff to get their boosters and [report them to Employee Health Services](#). Feel free to print out and post the attached flyer in work areas.

Earlier this month, I told you about a new [quick reference guide for staff](#) about the Omicron variant. Today, we are launching a [parallel page for leaders](#). It's intended to be a one-stop resource with links to the latest policies, processes, support resources, and other information.

As you may have heard, the federal government is giving out [four free rapid test kits](#) per household, and you can order yours [through the U.S. Postal Service](#). It's easy, and I encourage you to do so.

Although the numbers are moving in the right direction now, I know it has been a rough couple of weeks on top of a rough two years. I was able to get out and round at several of our sites recently, as I do whenever I can, and I want you to know how impressed I am with everyone's dedication. Thank you yet again for everything you do. We're going to need to stick with it for a little longer, but please know that you are truly, still, making all the difference in the world for our patients and our community.

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